Chapter 8: To Play Hard

By Masaoki Shindo

TRANSLATION: CALEB COOK LETTERING: KYLA AIKO

YAWN...

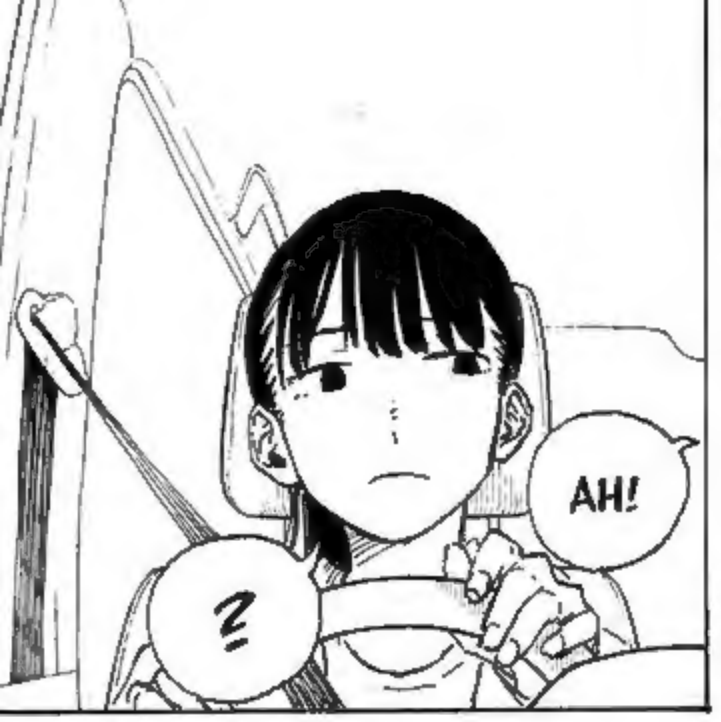
10:13

G'MORNIN'...
SO MUCH FOR THE EARLY BIRD! HURRY AND GET READY.
HM.
WE GOTTA HUSTLE, BUT YOU STILL WANT BREAKFAST?
FINE, I'LL WHIP SOMETHING UP WHILE YOU WASH UP.
YUS. FOOD, PLEASE.

VERY REASSURING.
LAY OFF ME, GEEZ.
DON'T SWITCH YOUR BRAIN OFF JUST BECAUSE IT'S THE WEEKEND, OKAY?
ZZZIP—
GOT EVERYTHING PACKED?
UH, YEAH. PROLLY.

HOW 'BOUT COLD TEA?
WE'RE GONNA STOP BY THE CORNER STORE, SO...
...NEED ANYTHING?

READY FOR A SWELL DAY, DAUGHTER O' MINE?
AND WE'RE OFF!


AH!
?

I SAY... I DUNNO. NOT HUNGRY ENOUGH.
AND WE'VE BEEN BLESSED WITH SUN! WHAT DO YOU SAY TO A PICNIC?
WELL, UPDATE ME WHEN YOU ARE.

GAH!

I'LL STOP THE CAR! HOP OUT FOR A MINUTE!!
YOU'RE KILLING ME WITH THIS TIMING!!
TRY TO KEEP OUT OF SIGHT!!

...AFTER ALL THIS, NOTHING MUCH COULD SURPRISE ME.
I MEAN...
LAST NIGHT

MORE *PERKS*. GREAT.
ODDS ARE YOUR LATEST TRAIT IS A PERK CONNECTED TO THAT.

...YOU'RE SAYING DRAGONS CAN ACTUALLY CALL LIGHTNING?
SO...
I SURE AM.

HAND OVER THAT WET UNIFORM.
Y'THINK I CAN CALL LIGHTNING TOO THEN?
HARD TO SAY.
THERE'RE A BUNCH OF TRAITS LIKE THAT. BIG BAD FORCES OF NATURE, BASICALLY.
AND, LIKE IT OR NOT, THEY'RE IN YOUR GENES.
SIGH...

WHICH WOULDN'T BE THE END OF THE WORLD. EXCEPT THAT THEY'RE POPPING OUT UNPROMPTED.
WHEN WE WERE WRANGLING THE FIRE, I REALIZED...
...THAT YOUR TRAITS ARE PROBABLY IN A *FRENZY*.
?!

WHOA. SOUNDS BADASS. BUT PROLLY BAD NEWS, HUH?
BEEP
BEEP
IT'S NO REASON TO CELEBRATE, I'LL SAY THAT MUCH. IMAGINE IF YOU FIRED OFF AN ACTUAL LIGHTNING BOLT.
UH...
BEEP

...TO KEEP THAT LIGHTNING IN THE BOTTLE.

SO WE'RE GONNA DO WHATEVER IT TAKES...
...

HUH?
YOU MEAN... I'M SKIPPING SCHOOL? AGAIN?

IT'LL BE A HIGH-OCTANE DAY, SO GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP.
I'LL FILL YOU IN TOMORROW.
KEEP IT THERE... HOW?
WHRRR

HA HA HA... SOUNDS LIKE YOU NEED A GOOD SOAK, SNEEZY.

ACHOO!
OH. DUH.
ON A *SATURDAY*? SCHOOLS ARE TYPICALLY CLOSED, HONEY.

I SAW THIS COMING, SO I FILLED THE BATH AND SET IT TO STAY HOT.
STEP ONE: GET YOU BACK TO FULL STRENGTH!
KCHK
WHATEVER HAPPENED TODAY THAT YOU'RE NOT TELLING ME...
...IT CAN WAIT. NO TOUGH CONVERSATIONS TONIGHT!
PLUNK
...
LIGHTNING ...
SPLSH
HEH.
SICK.
ALL CAUGHT UP. NOW BACK TO THE PRESENT...

JUST AN ANTISTATIC BAND.
THE HECK'S THIS?
SLAP THIS ON YOUR WRIST.

ANTIZAP BRACELET, HUH? THAT'S A NEW ONE.
MADE JUST FOR DRAGONS?
NOPE. BOUGHT IT ONLINE.
OH. IT STOPPED.
WEARING THAT SHOULD HOPEFULLY PREVENT MORE UNINVITED ZAPS.
THE LATEST MOVE IN YOUR ARSENAL IS BASICALLY A JUMBO-SIZE STATIC SHOCK, SO THIS THING MIGHT DO THE TRICK.

I SWEAR, YOU CAN'T TAKE DRAGONS ANYWHERE.
WHAT A CLOSE ONE.
SINCE IT'S JUST A TEMPORARY BAND-AID...
...BE SURE TO TAKE IT OFF AND LET THE LIGHTNING LOOSE ONCE IN A WHILE.
THEY JUST SELL THIS? WHO KNEW.

WHERE TO, THOUGH?
NOW, WITH TEA IN HAND, WE'RE BACK ON THE ROAD!

UHH?
Spo-cha
AMUSEMENT
BILLIARD
DARTS
Relaxation&Comic
IN-LINE SKATES
SPO-CHA
TABLETENNIS
GOLF
Spo-cha

YE OF LITTLE PATIENCE.
SOOO... WHY THIS SPOT?

OH, I THINK WE CHECK OURSELVES IN?
FIRST THINGS FIRST— LET'S GET REGISTERED.
SHOULD'VE KNOWN THIS PLACE WOULD BE JAM-PACKED ON THE WEEKEND.

SCUSE ME?
DO I PRESS... THIS?
TO PLAY HARD! WHY ELSE?
YOU WANNA TELL ME WHY WE'RE HERE?

AND THE LIGHTNING RISK?
NO WORRIES! THAT'S PART OF IT TOO.

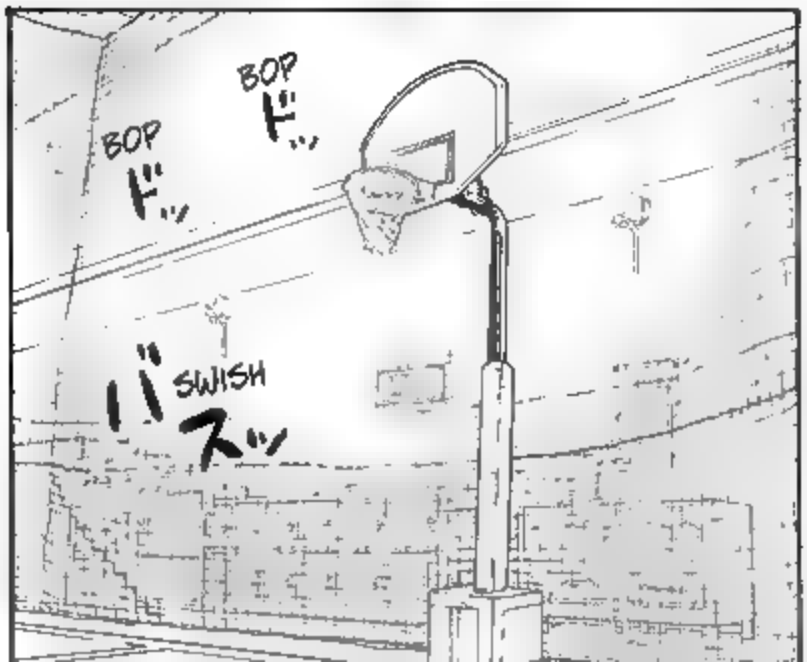
入場
ENTRANCE
AGAIN, WHY?
TO GET IN SOME MUCH-NEEDED EXERCISE.
HOPE YOU'RE READY TO SWEAT.

IT'S RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RANDOM OUTBURSTS *AND* THE DRY SPELLS.
AND IT'S PROOF YOUR BODY ISN'T FUNCTIONING QUITE RIGHT.

YEAAAH, NOT REALLY. SOMETIMES I CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN, BUT THEN RANDOMLY NOT.
ON THAT NOTE, YOU'RE NOT DOING SO HOT WITH THE FIRE, RIGHT?
RIGHT, SURE.
YOU CAN BLAME THE FRENZY STATE FOR THAT TOO.

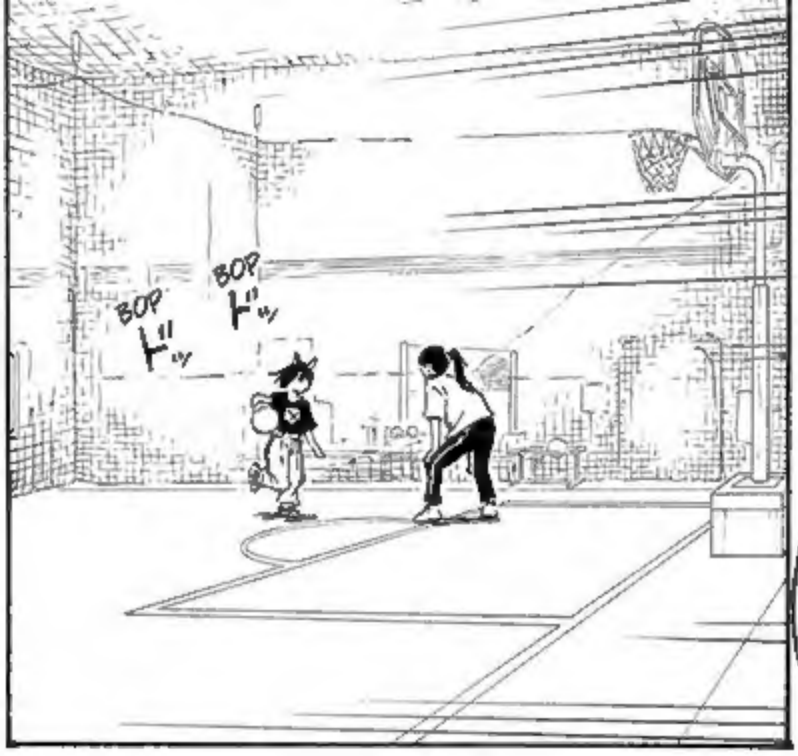
WHAT CONTROLS THOSE FUNCTIONS? BLOOD FLOW, OF COURSE.
IT ALL CIRCLES BACK TO HOW MUCH YOUR BLOOD'S PUMPING...
...WHICH LEADS US TO EXERCISE!!

UGH...
MOTHER OF THE YEAR OVER HERE JUST WANTS TO KICK LOOSE.
HOPE YOU'RE READY TO RUMBLE!!


BOP ドゥ
BOP ドゥ
SWISH バスッ

WHAT'S FIRST?

AH HA HA HA HA HA!!
DAAAMMIT!!
AWW, ALL TUCKERED OUT, KIDDO? CAN'T KEEP UP WITH THIS CREAKY 36-YEAR-OLD? STEP IT UP, HONEY!!
NUH-UH! CAN'T! WHERE'D YOU GET THOSE SKILLS?!
SHOW YOUR MAMA HER DUE RESPECT.
THUNK
SWISH

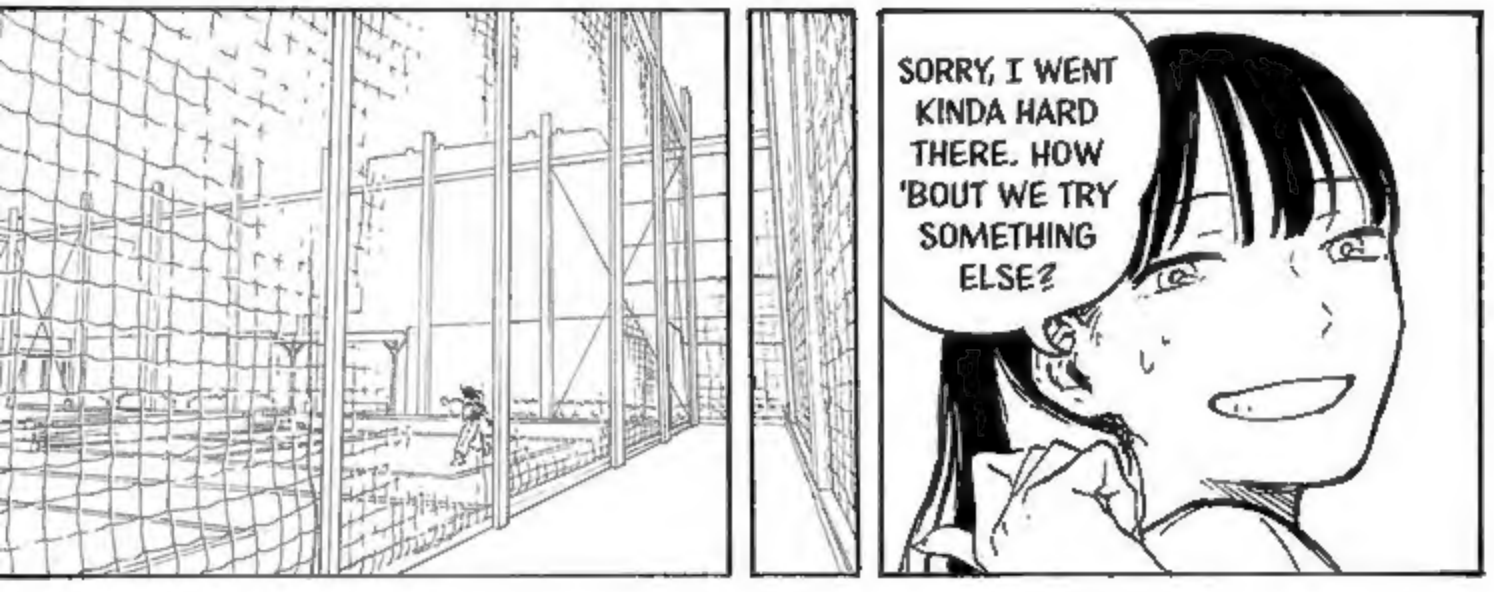

BOP
BOP

HFF...
HFF...
COME ON, SHOOT IT. ARE YOU EVEN *TRYING* TO SCORE?
BWAP

HEY!
ZOOP
YOINK!
FWAP

ガスッ
THUNK

AH HA HA!! THAT'S 10-0!
NRAAAAH!


SORRY, I WENT KINDA HARD THERE. HOW 'BOUT WE TRY SOMETHING ELSE?

WHEW!
C'MON! THAT ALL YOU GOT?

!!
LIKE, STUPIDLY GOOD.
FREAKIN' MOM... HOW'S SHE SO GOOD AT LITERALLY EVERYTHING?
THWOK
!!
GET ON MY LEVEL— IF YOU CAN!!
FWOOSH
OOPS!
AH.
CAN'T LET HER STOMP ME LIKE THIS.
GAH ---
SORRY!

AND WE'RE HAVING FUN, SO WHAT-EVER.
...I HAVEN'T SEEN THIS SIDE OF HER IN A WHILE.
BUT I GUESS...
MAYBE IT'S A LITTLE CRINGE...
NOT THAT THERE'S ANYTHING WRONG WITH A GIRL MY AGE HANGING WITH HER MOM.
THIS PLACE COULD BE A GOOD TIME WITH SOME ACTUAL FRIENDS.
...BUT I'LL TRUST HER AND GIVE THIS A SHOT.
To be continued!